

# Balance Your Budget for the Holidays

---

## Enjoy the Holidays Without Breaking the Bank

The holidays can be joyful without overspending. Plan ahead with our tips and our budgeting guide to keep your finances on track.

### Tips for Smart Spending

1. Start with Fixed Expenses
  - Prioritize essential bills like rent, utilities, and tuition.
2. Set a Holiday Spending Limit
  - Decide what's reasonable for gifts, meals, and celebrations.
3. Track as You Go
  - Keep a record to avoid surprises.
4. Save Where You Can
  - Look for discounts, DIY options, or free holiday activities.
5. Remember What Matters
  - Focus on experiences and connections over material things.

### Why Budgeting Matters

- Ensures your essential needs are covered.
- Helps you enjoy the holidays without financial stress.
- Keeps you focused on long-term financial goals.

### HSC Financial Resources

- [HSC Financial Aid](#)
- [HSC Financial Aid Budgeting Resources](#)
- [SmartDollar](#)
- [SARC Student Emergency Fund](#)
  - \*Note: you must apply for the SEF to receive monetary aid. Eligibility requirement can be found at the link above.

## Simple Budgeting Template

Dip your toes in the budgeting waters by trying our basic budgeting template. When you're ready to dive deeper, check out [HSC Financial Aid's budgeting and monetary support resources](#).

### Fixed Expenses (Non-Negotiables)

These will look different from person to person, but typically items like rent, insurance, groceries, and gas will fit into this category.

Expense	Planned Amount (\$)	Spent Amount (\$)
Rent + utilities		
Tuition		
Groceries		
Transportation		

### Holiday Spending (Flexible Costs)

Again, these look different from person to person, but it can be easy to slip into impulse shopping and not checking your budget before big purchases. Having a plan and knowing what the costs are ahead of time, can really help you figure out what you can purchase today and what can wait. A good rule of thumb for flexible spending is to wait at least 48 hours before making a purchase on an item you "do not need."

Category	Planned Amount (\$)	Spent Amount (\$)
Gifts		
Dining out		
Travel		
Other		